

Asia-Pacific Leadership Initiative on Gender and Climate Change

Sustainable Solutions for Climate Change



24 Gender Champions
6 Countries



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LOWERING EMISSIONS
IN ASIA'S FORESTS

Overview

What are the main issues?

- Neglect of gender issues in forestry and land use sectors hampers behavioral change, inclusive growth and sustainable solutions to climate change challenges.
- Institutions and individuals integrating gender issues into climate change often work in isolation with limited resources. Random capacity building without strategic frameworks for gender equality limits ability to influence policies.
- Champions working in forestry and land use need tailored skills development to enhance technical competencies and provide strategic opportunities for gender integration.

What is the Leadership Initiative?

- From November 2013 to November 2015, the United States Agency for International Development Lowering Emissions in Asia's Forests (USAID LEAF) program's *Asia-Pacific Leadership Initiative on Gender and Climate Change* strengthened 24 Gender Champions from Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia and Papua New Guinea.
- The Gender Champions increased technical knowledge and skills, resulting in more confident, visible leaders, networked with each other to address gender issues in climate change.
- Two years of intense training, personal and professional reflection, and growth in leadership skills have resulted in a regional network of Gender Champions who have already exerted their influence on policy decisions at the local, regional and national levels.



Chinneth Cheng
Ministry of Women's Affairs
Cambodia



Dr. Douangsamone Dalavong
The Lao Women's Union
Laos



Gayle Tatsi
Office for the Development of
Women
Papua New Guinea

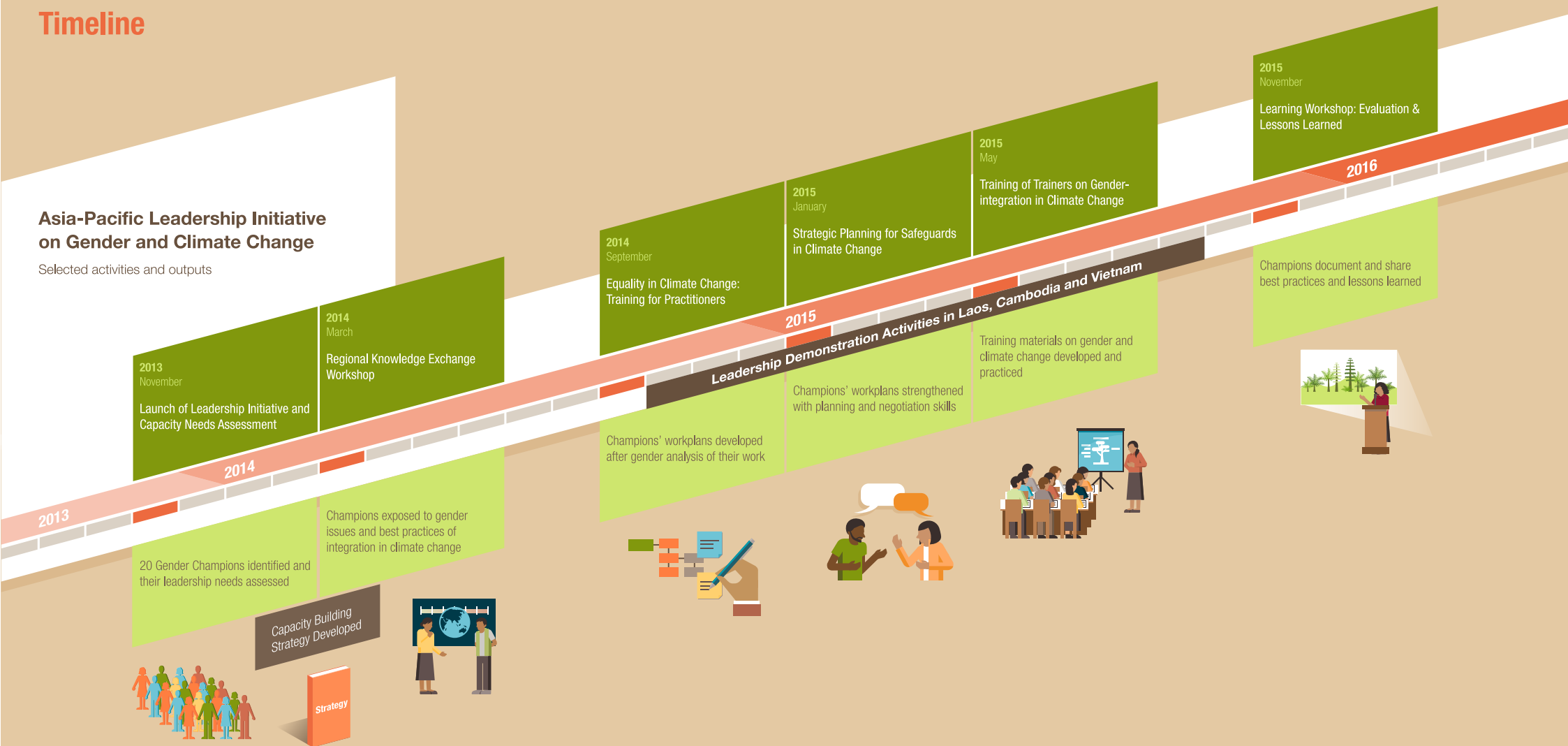


Gwen Sissiou
Office of Climate Change and
Development
Papua New Guinea

Timeline

Asia-Pacific Leadership Initiative on Gender and Climate Change

Selected activities and outputs



Hoai Nam Hoang Cong
Lam Dong Department of
Agricultural and Rural Development
Vietnam



Hue Minh Nguyen
Thanh Hoa Department of Natural
Resources and Environment
Vietnam



Khamnouy Chanthalary
Department of Forestry
Laos



Kim Neng
Ministry of Environment
Cambodia

Strategies



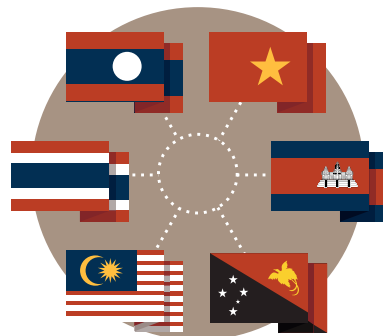
The Leadership Initiative used a **strategic, tailored, two-tiered capacity building approach** resulting in Champions who are technically competent, better networked, more confident and visible. These leaders cultivated management support to develop gender inclusive climate change solutions within their organizations and beyond.

Strategically selected **Gender Champions** brought to the Initiative an interest and mandate to implement gender and climate change work in their organizations, ensuring entry points to build on personal and professional potential.



Champions constantly **reflected on leadership and gender equality** in their personal and professional lives. Recognizing that gender is present in and impacts all social and professional interactions, the Initiative challenged Champions' assumptions, determined their potential, and supported the development and implementation of gender-integrated workplans.

Capacity building was developed to address country-specific gender gaps in climate change while **linking all Champions** to build a network for the Asia-Pacific region.



Kim Sokhanry
Ministry of Women's Affairs
Cambodia



Dr. Kinnalone Phommasack
Department of Forestry
Laos



Leilani Pais-Kambuou
Office of Climate Change and
Development
Papua New Guinea

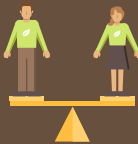


Lomkham Sengchanoudom
Department of Forestry
Laos

Results



Over 365,000 people in six countries have benefited from the Champions' increased commitment and networking, leading to increased awareness of gender issues in climate change.



Nine institutions have strengthened gender equality practices in their organizations.



Together, the Gender Champions have contributed to 16 policy measures by including gender inputs to promote and safeguard gender equality.



A regional network and constituency of Gender Champions across the Asia-Pacific has now been established for knowledge exchange and replication.

The Leadership Initiative provided Champions a space to reflect, share and build a common understanding of gender issues in climate change. Personal reflection and transformation led them to re-evaluate and re-strategize their vision for gender and the environment.

With new skills and a growing network, highly motivated gender champions emerged to take on important roles, influencing attitudes and behaviors to build support among staff and management for gender equality. They liaised with strategic networks and leveraged resources from organizations to initiate, support and scale up the practices they learned. They earned credibility among senior management and many were promoted or assigned special leadership tasks.

This mix of committed leaders ensures the sustainability of the Initiative, and the following stories demonstrate the leadership of Gender Champions in their countries.



Mayvong Sayatham
CGIAR Research Program on
Water, Land and Ecosystems
Laos



Nghiep Quang Le
Lam Dong Department of
Agricultural and Rural Development
Vietnam



Pisith Sok
Ministry of Women's Affairs
Cambodia



Ratchada Arpornsilp
Center for People and Forests
Thailand



Gender Advocacy Strengthened at ASEAN in Malaysia

"I was frustrated and had reached a saturation point after 20 years' experience with gender trainings," Sunitha Bishan will tell you. The Leadership Initiative changed that and with newfound enthusiasm, Sunitha has worked to strengthen indigenous women leaders in Sarawak, teach gender and environmental issues at Malaysian universities, conduct gender research in climate change, draft the ASEAN Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines, and she has a weekly radio show on environmental stewardship that reaches 300,000 people. She has also been appointed chair of the Environmental and Climate Change Committee of the National Council of Women's Organizations, where she will mobilize 119 affiliates nationwide on gender-inclusive planning and capacity building.

Gender Team Formed and Gender Action Plan Developed in Laos

Dr. Kinnalone Phommasack, Deputy Director for REDD+ in the Lao Department of Forestry (DOF), recalls that "gender used to be missing in most climate change work." Now she will tell you that the Leadership Initiative helped put gender back on the agenda. The Initiative helped build her and her team's capacity to integrate gender equality into forestry work. The process also sensitized staff within DOF, who are now more aware of important roles women play in forestry and climate change. Recently, senior management of DOF attended the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and Action Plan workshop, where all were actively engaged in development of a Gender Action Plan, which allows DOF to implement and monitor gender-integration into its work. Kinnalone's overall leadership has been recognized by her peers and she was recently appointed a member of the National Commission for Advancement of Women.



Ratha Chhan
Ministry of Women's Affairs
Cambodia



Sar Sophyra
Forestry Administration
Cambodia



Sisomphet Souvanthalisith
Commission for the Advancement
of Women, Ministry of Agriculture
and Forestry - Laos



Sopanha Vong
Forestry Administration
Cambodia

Women's Leadership Established in Forestry Administration in Cambodia

Sopanha Vong says the combination of technical gender expertise and strategic skills learned during the Leadership Initiative gave her the confidence to develop and secure funding for the first gender project within her organization. “Before the Initiative, I thought training could solve gender equality issues. Now I know that there must be an organizational mandate to improve gender equality and that organizational policies and resources need to be gender-inclusive as well,” Sophana explains. Owing to her confidence and leadership, she was promoted to Deputy Director of Forestry Administration where she is actively working to promote gender equality in climate change policies. Her leadership has been recognized by her peers and management and she was recently appointed as a gender trainer in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

Gender-integrated Accountability Mechanisms Promoted in Vietnam

Ms. Hoai Nam Hoang Cong has long promoted gender integration in her work. When Lam Dong began development of a Provincial REDD+ Action Plan (PRAP), she saw an immediate opportunity to integrate gender. “Participating in the Leadership Initiative reinforced my knowledge, experience and challenges of integrating gender into forestry. I felt like I had new energy to lead my life and the vision for my future work became clear to me.” With her assistance, USAID LEAF, UN-REDD and Lam Dong DARD completed a gender assessment of the Lam Dong PRAP, identifying strengths and opportunities, and developed recommendations to strengthen gender responsiveness. The final version of Lam Dong’s PRAP incorporated gender elements across key areas including financial management, implementation arrangements, monitoring and evaluation, and the key roles of ethnic minorities. Thanks to the planning and negotiation session of the Leadership Initiative, she emerged a better communicator and negotiator.

Policy and Practice Linked in Papua New Guinea

When Gayle Tatsi joined the Leadership Initiative, she was involved with high level policy and legislation work in Papua New Guinea. “The skills and knowledge gained have enabled me to make better connections between policy and practice and I have learned the importance of engaging with diverse stakeholders,” Gayle says. She has used this new knowledge by ensuring participation of civil society organizations (CSOs) while drafting government policies on Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Often left out of the drafting process, Gayle ensured that CSOs including churches, the private sector and other non-governmental organizations provided inputs to policies. This has ensured CSO ownership of the policies, paving the way for successful application and accountability. Seeing the stakeholders’ commitment, Gayle’s team, with technical assistance from the United Nations Development Program, has assisted nine provinces in PNG to develop action plans which mirror national strategy.



Sunitha Bishan
National Council of Women's
Organizations
Malaysia



Thuy Thi Pham
Thanh Hoa Women's Union
Vietnam



Dr. U. Sirita
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry
and Fisheries
Cambodia



Vansy Senyavong
Women Mobilizing for
Development (MHP)
Laos

The impact of the Leadership Initiative is wide ranging and impressive. These 24 Gender Champions, and the ever growing network they are creating and mentoring, are leading efforts across Asia-Pacific to ensure gender equality in climate change policies and practices.



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